A MEMORIAL OF
RUFUS ELLIS

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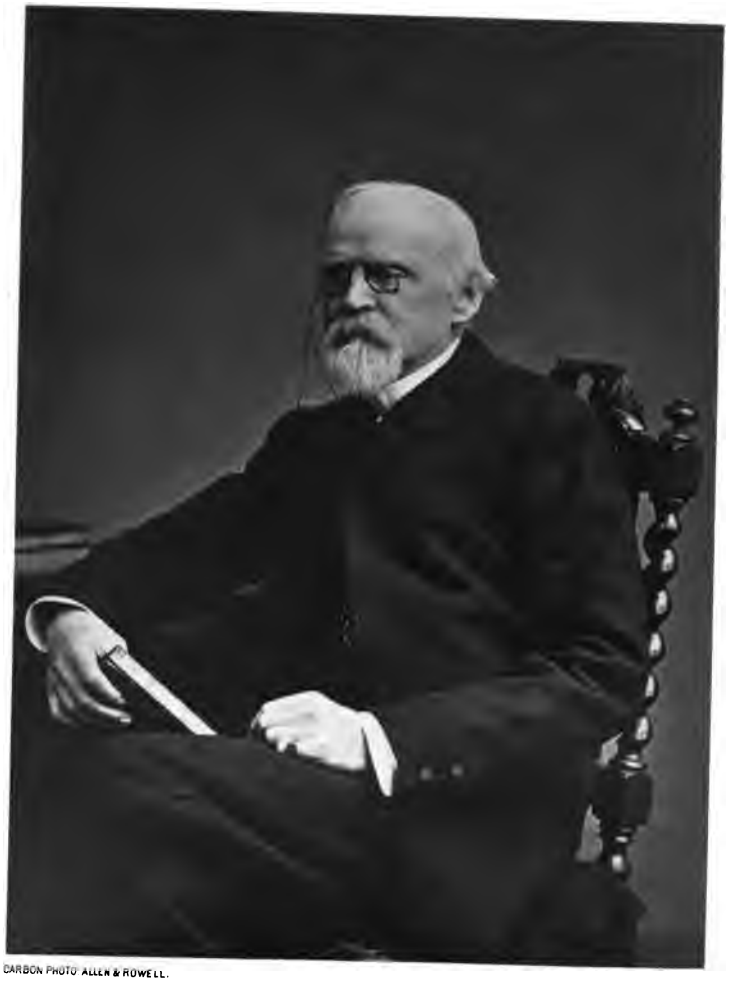
REV. RUFUS ELLIS, D.D.



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Rufus Ellis.

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REV. RUFUS ELLIS, D.D.

Prepared by a Committee.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

RUFUS ELLIS, son of David and Sarah Rogers Ellis, was born in Summer Street, Boston, Sept. 14, 1819. His father, a Boston merchant and ship-owner, was born in Dedham, Mass., and probably descended from Richard Ellis, of Dedham, England, who had an allotment of land made to him in that town in Massachusetts in 1642. His mother was a daughter of Jeremiah Dummer Rogers [H. C. 1762], a Boston lawyer and Loyalist. At the evacuation of Boston, Rogers went with the British army to Halifax, and it was there that the mother of Rufus Ellis was born.

It may well be true, as Dr. Peabody suggests in his memorial sermon, that the aptitude of Dr. Ellis for a ministerial calling may be largely attributed to heredity on his mother's side. His maternal ancestry can be clearly traced from the Rev. John Rogers of Dedham, England, through a succession of ministers, including the Rev. Nathaniel Rogers, the first minister of Ipswich, Mass. The striking continuity of this line of descent, so peculiar to some of our old New England families, and which, as Dr. Holmes

justly asserts in his Life of Emerson, cannot be surpassed for the intellectual vigor which it imparts, in the case of Dr. Ellis was not broken until we come to his grandfather, Jeremiah Dummer Rogers, who, as already mentioned, was a lawyer instead of a minister.

Rufus Ellis entered Chauncy Hall School in September, 1828, and Harvard College in 1834. After graduating in 1838, he went to the Cambridge Divinity School, from which he graduated in 1841. His first ministerial service was in the pulpit of Dr. Hedge's church in Bangor, Maine. After passing a few weeks there, he took the charge of the Second Congregational Church in Northampton for six months. On leaving this charge, a Committee of the society communicated to him a warm vote of thanks for his "earnest, devoted, and acceptable" labors, which were so much appreciated that he soon after received an invitation to become their settled minister.

In the spring of 1842, at the close of his engagement in Northampton, he received a call to Rochester, N. Y., to start a new society in that place. After remaining in Rochester about a year, during which time a substantial brick edifice was erected and a good congregation gathered by his devoted efforts, he felt obliged to accept a unanimous call to become the pastor of the Northampton church, to which office he was ordained in the month of June, 1843.

He remained in Northampton for ten years, and was then installed as minister of the First Church in Boston, May 4, 1853. When he assumed the charge, the society worshipped in Chauncy Place. At the close of the year 1868, the present church edifice was consecrated. At the time of his death he had been minister for over thirty-two years.

During his fourth and last visit to Europe, in the summer of 1885, he travelled in Norway. He died at Liverpool, of disease of the heart, early in the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 23, 1885, the day on which he was to have sailed for home.

Besides his wife, and daughter, and parishioner, Miss Mary Anne Wales, he was fortunate in having with him, at the same hotel in Liverpool, Dr. George H. Lyman, of Boston, an old friend from the days of his pastorate in Northampton. Dr. Lyman attended him during his brief illness; and after his death, with the help of Mr. Reginald Harrison, a distinguished surgeon of Liverpool, was enabled to have the arrangements made to send the body home by the same steamer on which Dr. Ellis had engaged passage. This vessel, the "Scythia," arrived at her dock in Boston Saturday morning, October 3.

The funeral services were held at the First Church in Boston on Wednesday, Oct. 7, 1885, at noon. The church was filled with a large congregation, the gallery being reserved for the Sunday-school.

Among those present were many prominent persons, both ministers and laymen. The decorations in the church were appropriate and simple, the pulpit, chancel, and organ being draped in black cloth.

At twelve o'clock, Rev. Henry W. Foote met the body, in its simple coffin of English oak with brass mountings, at the door of the church, and preceded it up the broad aisle, reading the opening lines of the burial service from the Book of Common Prayer used in the church: "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he who believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

The pall-bearers were Mr. D. Waldo Salisbury, Mr. George W. Wales, Dr. Samuel L. Abbot, Mr. Henry Saltonstall, Mr. Edward R. Hall, Rev. Frederic H. Hedge, D.D., Rev. James Freeman Clarke, D.D., Rev. Phillips Brooks, D.D. Immediately following the coffin were members of the Standing Committee of the church, as follows: Mr. George O. Shattuck, Dr. James C. White, Mr. William F. Matchett, Mr. Joseph B. Moors, Mr. William A. Haskell, Mr. Thomas O. Richardson, Mr. Reuben E. Demmon, Mr. Asa P. Potter, Mr. Daniel C. Holder, Mr. George F. Putnam, Mr. Alfred B. Hall, and the Clerk and Treasurer of the Society, Mr. George L. Deblois.

When the body was laid at the foot of the chancel, the church choir chanted "The Lord is my Shepherd." Mr. Foote continued the service by

reading selections from the Psalms; then came an anthem, "Thy Will be done;" after which Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, D.D., read the Scriptures, and Rev. Francis G. Peabody the prayers. Rev. Edward E. Hale, D.D., then delivered the memorial address, which was followed by the hymn, "While thee I seek, protecting Power." Rev. John H. Morison, D.D., pronounced the benediction.

At the close of the service in the church, the body was taken to the Cambridge Cemetery and there buried; the many beautiful wreaths and crosses of ivy and flowers being brought with it from the church and laid upon the grave.

Rev. Francis G. Peabody read the committal service, and the choir sang a hymn by Watts, beginning, "Hear what the voice from heaven proclaims." The weather was fine, and many persons besides the Committee of the church were present at the grave. The services both there and at the church were simple, but most appropriate and impressive, and were under the special charge of a Committee of the church.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS,

PRONOUNCED AT THE FUNERAL

BY REV. EDWARD E. HALE.

IT is hard to tell in words how much we love this friend and how much we honor him. It will only be the experience of these years before us, which will show to the people of Boston how necessary to the best work of Boston this quiet and unobtrusive man had made himself. It is not hard to recall anecdotes of his true and pure life, and to repeat the catalogue of this and that enterprise in which he engaged for the public good. But that tale, when it is told, may leave untold the story of his gentleness, his purity, his utter unselfishness, and of that Christian spirit which quickened the whole, and gave to the whole its exquisite and especial value.

It has been my good fortune to know him since we were both boys. For nearly thirty years our lives have passed here side by side; and we have, in some cases, shared the same responsibilities and pleasures. Yet for all this, I know I am quite unfit to describe, in a few words, that charm of his quiet and dignified unconscious integrity which we shall always remember, which will always bless us, and

which we have not lost, although we see him no longer.

I knew him first in college, where he graduated easily the first scholar of the class, taking the lead in a class in which he has since been distinguished. Everybody knew that this rank was his right. He took the lead, as men sometimes do, by the utter conscientiousness with which he addressed himself to every pursuit. He never lost his enthusiasm for the classical languages, but it may be a surprise to some who hear me to know that he was a proficient in mathematics. It is there, perhaps, that we find the origin of his singular clearness of statement, which gave epigram to so much that he said, and perhaps to his dislike of mere arts of rhetoric and oratory. But what interested us most in college was the interest that he and a group of men in his own class took in the religious philosophy of the time. There were some of them who had been aroused by what Coleridge had been writing and publishing, which, with other causes, had wrought a very great change in the rather stiff Orthodoxy of New England. This group of men, with whom Mr. Ellis was closely connected, made a careful study of the theology of the great English philosopher. I remember that some of them made a pilgrimage to see Professor Marsh, who was the first great expounder of Coleridge in this country. Some of these men, when they entered on the duties of manhood, were glad to avail themselves of the freedom

which the Episcopal Church gave them from a somewhat hard Orthodoxy. As for him, he was free-born: he needed no emancipation. He entered our own Divinity School, embarking thus early in the broad range of high Christian philosophy, from which no moment of his life has been separated, and which has been a blessing and a help to him in distress, responsibility, and care. He was a favorite student of Dr. Palfrey, in the keen and exegetical criticism which made that distinguished man what he was, as well as a friend of the distinguished Henry Ware, sympathizing with him in the tender love of the Saviour and his sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and quickened by him in conversation and prayer.

Such is the young man I remember so well on the day of his ordination at Northampton, where he followed in the ministry of the Unitarian church a distinguished series of men: Dr. Hall, afterwards of the First Church in Providence; Dr. Stearns, so long at the head of the Divinity School; and our friend still living, the high priest of music, — which I may claim as a department of theology, — John S. Dwight. He followed in such footsteps. He prepared for the work of our profession at a time of singular interest. The chains of the old Orthodoxy were giving way under the magnificent mission work of the Orthodox Church of New England, under such work as that of Coleridge of which I have spoken, under the whole Unita-

rian movement, and in the midst of the new tide of life which America was beginning to lead when she began to feel that she was herself a nation. It was at the beginning of the inevitable conflict in which the Civil War culminated. Here was this young man in a congregation of people who knew the best thought and the best life. How they recognized him as a friend and brother! There are hundreds of strong men and women up and down in America to-day who would tell us what that ministry wrought for them, — who are what they are, because he was what he was then and there.

Thirty-two years ago he was called to the ministry of this ancient church, — just the man for the church, and the church just the church for him. I cannot conceive of any place in the world which he would have been so glad to fill; and how nobly he has filled it, you know. I would not dare, in this place or in this presence, to try to express in any detail my sense of the way in which he has fulfilled a pastor's work in this congregation. Since we got the sad news of his death, it has been a most pathetic thing to see how one was stopped in the streets by men who felt that each of them was a personal friend of this man, and who wished to tell how much they had received from him. But I may speak of the public service which he has rendered to the city of Boston, — a leader in so many enterprises where one expects the Church to lead. The time has changed since such men as he were of necessity called into

public life for services which now we wisely intrust to persons engaged in specific callings. Thus, we now have a superintendent of schools and supervisors, to carry on the immense machinery of education; but in his early ministry here he was one who was working unthanked, unpaid, unregarded, in the school committee, to do exactly the work now done by men who are set aside for this purpose. And in doing the work of the great charities, he brought in that wonderful business power which I suppose he had inherited from some man of affairs, while he brought in his tender determination "to make himself of no reputation, and to take upon himself the form of a servant." That can be said as truly of him as it can of any man whom we have known.

In the organization of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, he was a leader for years. He was much interested, and careful in organizing the system — shall I say? — of that magnificent bishopric which undertakes a ministry at large, — undertakes to provide for the spiritual need of every stranger and exile not historically connected with any established church in Boston. But, at the same time, he would speak with magnificent scorn of a church that had not itself a vital connection with strangers and with the poor. And you know how grand was that system which he organized in this church, by which he drew into its ministrations so many even from the very outskirts of the city, who needed and

found here friendship and counsel and blessing. There are thousands scattered all over the country who were called in here by such determination of his, and would tell you to-day how they first heard gospel truth here, how their physical needs were here relieved, — nay, how they were received here into a higher life.

As an officer of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, he understood, through and through, where are the difficulties, where are the hardships, and in what line success must be sought. All this he had studied before the present wave of interest and sympathy with the Indians. In connection with his work in the Provident Association and in the Associated Charities, there is an epigram of his which ought to be written in letters of gold on the walls of every one of these reformatories and institutions and asylums which this country is so fond of building on so large a scale of machinery, — "You can do a man no good, unless you are making him better," — an epigram stating the last and best result of the whole modern science of the relief of poverty, while it states in the simplest words the elements of the work of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I cannot go into greater detail. It is in such work as this that he has served this city. When we are asked how that work is to be carried on without him, as we feel the need of his help, the years which are before us will be building his monument and writing the words of his memorial.

There is one thing which he would call a little thing, but it is the thing which is causing tears to fall now, I might say, in almost every town in this Commonwealth. It is the tender ministry which this quiet man carried forward for the widows and orphans of the clergy, and the correspondence he carried on with those who received the little tribute which the generosity of past times has devoted for their maintenance and care. How tenderly he did this work, which is a work of personal sympathy, many who are before me know.

It is such things as these — these personal memories to which I only dare to allude — which will make us go day by day through the streets in recollection of one who will be more than ever, I believe, our friend, though we do not see his face. His life is going to quicken life, going to make us strong day by day and year by year, though we do not see his form here. For, at the foundation, this life so strong and so simple is built on the eternal gospel. This man held to Jesus Christ as the real leader of life, — as the leader of this modern life of to-day. Christianity was not for him any bit of mediæval imagery, any prehistoric fossil. To him true Christianity was to be the real life of the nineteenth century, In his heart, he believed and knew that men might walk in the Way of Jesus Christ, and believe his truth, and live his life. This was his hope and prayer and his expectation. He knew that Christ's kingdom would come, God's will would be done

upon this earth as it is in heaven. So it is that his memory is not going to die away; so it is that we are to remember him as a friend who has always blessed us. His memorial will not be of the cold stone placed in some cemetery. It will be in the hearts of those who rejoice in what he has done for the city of his birth.

A Commemorative Sermon

PREACHED AT THE FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON,

OCTOBER 11, 1885,

BEING THE SUNDAY SUCCEEDING THE FUNERAL OF THEIR PASTOR,

RUFUS ELLIS, D.D.

BY ANDREW P. PEABODY.

A COMMEMORATIVE SERMON.

Ye shall see heaven open. — John i. 51.

SEEING is believing, and faith grows dim for lack of sight. Heaven seems unreal and doubtful, because its openings are so few. Eras of strong faith have always been eras of clear vision. The light from the broken sepulchre shines on through the ages; but too often men's eyes are holden so that they cannot see their risen Lord. In common belief, tendency determines destiny. "Dust to dust" rounds out the sum of life for the soul that grovels earthward; the soul that has affections, aims, endeavors that transcend this world does not expect to die.

To all the greatly good heaven has seemed open. They have looked in. They have known what they were seeking, — have had already on earth in ever-growing measure what they have expected without measure in heaven. When Jesus spoke of things above, he testified of what he had seen; and, though earth-born, he by right of constant habitancy called himself "the Son of Man who is in heaven." Those who have continued his mission in this world have sat with him in heavenly places. Hence their

strength, their spiritual beauty and loveliness; and it has been their life-work to realize and obey the heavenly vision.

The departure of such a follower of Christ makes us mourners to-day; while for and with him we might well rejoice and give thanks. He lived ever as seeing heaven open. We have known many good men, but seldom a life like his, from youth to age, without swerving or intermission, wholly consecrated to God, — a continuous course heavenward, pursued first with all the ardor of youthful enthusiasm, then with the determined tread and the strenuous striving of vigorous manhood, then with unhalting step and still increasing energy under the burden of growing years and the deepening shadow of death. His life-long pursuit of heaven has been, too, like that of his Divine Master, — not the solitary path of ascetic devotion, not the sheltered sidewalk, with companions fit and few, of æsthetic fastidiousness; but the broad highway, in kindly communion with every fellow-traveller, and with the unceasing endeavor from all sorts and conditions of men to swell the ranks of those whose faces and steps are set heavenward.

Of your pastor's childhood I know nothing; but if we may judge from the temper and habit of his early youth, it is hardly possible that on the maternal side he did not come within the law of heredity intimated by Saint Paul when he writes to Timothy, " I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is

in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice." Of such faith, in the earlier generations, the homes, and especially the home Sunday-schools, of New England were the nurseries. In college your pastor gave no uncertain prestige of his subsequent life. Graduating at the head of his class, he was, of course, a faithful and diligent student, and that, not as a mere matter of duty, but with a genuine love of the best literature and learning that made him and kept him through all coming years an accomplished scholar. Nor was he insensible to the mirthful side of early life. He rejoiced in his youth, as every true man does; and ever afterward, from beneath the care and labor of his busiest seasons there was still the outcropping of a genial humor and a ready wit, keen-pointed, though without a sting. Yet his college-life was grave and serious; for it was at once hallowed by the highest aims and aspirations, and devoted, in whatever leisure it gave, to religious reading and study. His was the leading mind in a circle of collegians under the influence of Coleridge and the writers of his school, whose best thought, coming like a new revelation to the few recipient minds of that day, now seems obsolete, only because, no longer open to doubt or cavil, it permeates and leavens the religious philosophy of advanced thinkers of every Christian name.

With such a novitiate, Mr. Ellis had the best preparation possible for his course of theological

study, in which it was his happiness to have among his teachers Henry Ware, Jr., whose saintly spirit made the exercises of the class-room a fervent and fragrant altar-service, and, for the first year, John Gorham Palfrey, whose critical acuteness and thoroughness would alone have been a fair title to fame, had not all other merits been transcended by his signal example of Christian purity, faithfulness, and integrity. He was succeeded, for Mr. Ellis's last two years, by Dr. Noyes, whose rich and profound learning lacked not the crowning grace of Christian faith and piety. Fit ushers these for young men destined for the most sacred offices of our holy religion.

Mr. Ellis began to preach at Northampton, then supplied for a time the pulpit of a new society in Rochester, N. Y., where he declined an urgent invitation to settle permanently, then returned to Northampton, to be ordained as pastor of the Unitarian church. His was a peculiar position there. The ministry of Jonathan Edwards had, almost a century before, awakened equally a fervent zeal for extremest orthodoxy and an intensely bitter repugnancy. In the second and third generation the bitterness of antagonism was in some measure assuaged; and for the residuum of the original conflict there remained what I am inclined to think was the strongest, firmest, and most rigidly Calvinistic church in the State, and, outside of it, a body of men and women, sincerely religious, highly cultivated, deeply

thoughtful, no longer controversial in temper or purpose, but craving Christian ordinances from which an exclusive creed debarred them, and desiring a ministration of religious truth in accordance with their own views of Christ and his Gospel. They constituted a society of rare intelligence and receptivity, embracing a singularly large proportion of men and families of high social standing and extended influence. Their previous ministers had been men of eminent gifts, and of promise in their several ways richly fulfilled. Entire success in such a society and in the wake of such predecessors meant fully as much as it could have meant in a metropolitan pulpit. No ministry could have been happier than our friend's, or more prolific of such precious memories as outlast this earthly life. To him, or rather to some other man of similar mental capacity and endowments, it might have been an easy place, —its demands met by carefully written sermons, and by little beside except the enjoyment of refined society and elegant hospitality. But ease in Zion was beneath his ambition and outside of his belief. "The field is the world," was his motto as a Christian minister and as a Christian man. While there were the unevangelized to be led into the truth, the poor to be cared for, the vicious to be reclaimed, wrongs to be righted, any enterprise for human well-being to claim advocacy, calmly earnest labor was his only rest, well-balanced activity his repose. He would have found ample scope for work anywhere this side of Paradise,

and even there, were there feebler spirits whom he could make stronger.

While he was in Northampton, the Second Unitarian Society in Brooklyn, N. Y., was formed. Whether there was any official action with reference to his becoming its pastor I do not remember; but he was earnestly desired there by persons interested in the movement, who had known him in his Northampton parish, and I recollect distinctly how lovingly they told the story of his rural pastorate, and what strong assurance they felt of the rapid increase and permanent prosperity of this new enterprise, could he be secured as its leader.

Meanwhile, though no man ever did less with a view to reputation, his praise was in all the churches; and when he received the unanimous call to your pastorate, it was with the equally unanimous approval of all who knew him and were interested in your welfare. Your society was then strong, and among those who welcomed the new minister were not a few men of high distinction in literature and in public life, at the same time loyal members of the Church of Christ. But during the long vacancy of the pulpit the church-life had languished, and the interior organisms that sustain and feed it had suffered for lack of a guiding and controlling hand. Then, too, the greater part of the ablest supporters and most steadfast friends of the church were past middle life. The church-edifice also had ceased to be attractive, having gained no beauty in losing its primitive and

not unpleasing simplicity, and being already remote from the homes of a very large proportion of the worshippers and of those who might be expected to fill the vacant pews. Yet, with the growing disadvantages of location, your pastor's advent was an era of revival and renewed prosperity. It was no doubtful test of his hold on your affection and on the reverent regard of the whole community, that you could transfer your ancient church across the city to this new sanctuary, and recommence your worship under the happiest auspices, with an enlarged and growing congregation; and that, surrounded as you are by churches served by ministers of great and manifold gifts and graces, you have still maintained your generous provision for the services of public worship, your munificent charities, and your extended missionary labors among the destitute of your city.

In attempting to give some estimate of your pastor's life and work, I labor under one serious disability. A portrait needs shadows as well as lights, and I know not where or how to put in the shadows.

Dr. Ellis brought to his sacred calling powers and endowments of intellect that would have insured his eminence in science, in literature, in the law, or even — as I shall show more at length before I close — in commerce or finance. His mind was generously hospitable and receptive, and at the same time original. He read largely the best books, but used them

less as feeding than as stimulating thought. Subjects worthy of his reflection or treatment he sounded for himself, formed his own opinions, and expressed them in his own way. His style, both of writing and of unwritten speech, in its purity and in its wealth of diction, attested his continued conversance with the classic models by which it was formed in his youth. As a preacher he was most highly appreciated, as to the substance of his discourses, by persons of the deepest spiritual experience and discernment; as to their form and method, by those whose taste and culture best fitted them to pass judgment upon him. His range of subjects for the pulpit was less wide than it might have been, not because he lacked interest, knowledge, or capacity for a more extended scope, but because he regarded his office as that of a religious teacher, an ambassador of Christ, and therefore sought to do no other pulpit-work than such as tended to the Christian training of souls, the conversion of sinners, the edification of saints, the enlargement of the kingdom of God. A fastidious public might have asked for more; but that "more" would, we may apprehend, have appeared as a negative quantity in his account with the Master whom he served.

As to Christian theology, he attached prime, I might almost say sole, importance to the truths and facts of Christian experience, which are more fitly termed knowledge than faith. God in Christ, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the

Son, creating in the human soul a close kinship to Christ, and thus uniting the soul with God, would have summed up for him the Gospel revelation. For these truths he preferred the simplest and least technical statement, believing that the more complex their form, the less likely are they to make their way through men's minds into their hearts. If there were those like the disciples of John whom Paul found at Ephesus, who "had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," they might be the objects of his high regard, yet not of his religious fellowship. But as for those who had received the Spirit of God and who had fellowship with the Father and the Son, he felt on his own side no reason for separation, and recognized no dividing line of creed or ritual. Christlikeness, in his thought, was the sole and adequate token of the Christian estate and character. His religious sympathy, therefore, was broad and comprehensive, embracing equally those of narrow creeds, yet of large hearts, and those reputedly latitudinarian, who had drawn their life from Christ and in whom the Divine Spirit was a working power. Among his dearest friends were leading members of the (so-called) Orthodox church, who recognized with him the unity of the spirit as the all-sufficient bond of peace, amity, and love; and at Yale College, where he received his doctorate, he was held in special reverence, honor, and affection, not as having any peculiar affinity to the sect there dominant, but as occupying the position immeasur-

ably above that of any sect, which the best men of all the churches now hold or covet. In fine, he belonged to the broad church, — not to that which is often so termed because its other dimensions are insignificant, but to that which is broad, and at the same time deep and high.

As to the letter of Scripture and definite dogmatic statements, they seemed to him of less and less importance, as he felt more and more intensely the infinite worth and the divine omnipotence of the Spirit which alone giveth life.

He was a loyal member of the Congregational Church of Massachusetts, and was for many years an office-bearer in its Convention, and actively engaged in the distribution of its scanty alms and of the far more ample donations of the Congregational Charitable Society to the widows and daughters of deceased clergymen. It was his perpetual grief that common interest in funds that could not be divided remained the only bond of union between the Orthodox and the Liberal portion of the Congregational body. He rightly thought that the strongest reasons for the separation were created by the separation; that, had it not been for the intemperate zeal of a very few sectarians, equally able and bitter, the brethren who had stood in the kindest relations to one another might still have lived in harmony; and that each wing of the Congregational Church would have been of essential benefit to the other in checking tendencies to extreme dissilience, whether toward

ultra-Calvinism or rationalism. His regret that the division ever took place was and is shared by many on either side, including some who occupied for a time foremost places in the assault on the more liberal party. But the thinnest wedge may make a fissure which no attainable force can close.

As a pastor, your minister seemed to me unsurpassed, — some who have made the nearest approach to him are ready to say, unequalled, — alike in his clear and just conception of the duties appertaining to that office, and in his successful assiduity in discharging them.

There are two widely different theories as to what constitutes a Christian church. According to the one, a church is a close corporation of persons of competent pecuniary ability, who build, own, and occupy on Sunday mornings a sumptuous lecture and music room, and who consider their organization as accomplishing all its needed work if it enables them to listen to well-written and eloquently delivered sermons. They are willing, indeed, to contribute to the support of separate religious institutions for the poor, for whom they have no room in their own place of worship, but on condition of their being expected to do nothing that shall correspond to what Jesus did when he touched the lepers whom he healed. Such worshippers probably get what they seek. They have only gill-cups to bring, and these are filled, if not with the pure water of life, with a counterfeit of it which they like as well;

and it is their low notions of the Christian church and ministry that give voice to the prediction which we encounter now and then in the public prints, that the time is approaching when the pulpit will give place to the rostrum, the sermon to the scientific lecture, and the church-orchestra to the concert-room.

The other theory makes the individual church a body of Christian people associated to do the work which Christ committed to his disciples, — to diffuse the knowledge and the power of his religion, — to make aggressions upon heathenism and its attendant vices, and that, not primarily in far-off lands, but especially in their own community and within the sound of their own church-bell. They indeed worship God with their best, not unmindful of the shame felt by the shepherd-king that, while he lived in a house of cedar, the ark of God was in a tent. But while they rejoice in the outward beauty of their sanctuary, and in all in which art can minister to devotion, they regard propagandism not as an accident of their position or as open to their free choice, but as a condition without which they cannot be a living branch of the living vine, remembering the words of the Lord, " Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." The members of such a church go to the poor, and the poor come to them. They seek out modes of access to the unprivileged, and deem no obligation more sacred than that implied in their Divine

Master's words, "Freely ye have received; freely give."

Such was your pastor's theory of the church and of his office in it; and witness is borne to the wisdom and love with which he has actualized it, not only in these pews and by his fellow-workers, but in many a home once out of the Christian pale, now irradiated and beatified by the offices of evangelic mercy under his inspiration and guidance. He has done more than any other man within my knowledge in redeeming the Sunday-school for its original and rightful uses, and making it not a substitute for home-instruction, or for the attendance by children on public worship, but a nursery for the Church. I can never forget the Easter Sunday when I stood in his place here, and initiated into the Church of Christ by baptism the little flock that he had gathered as an Easter offering to his risen Lord. I find on my private record for that day twenty-one names, all of them of alien parentage, from ten different families, — the parents bearing their part with evidently profound feeling, as those who had been faithfully instructed in the meaning of the rite and in the solemn obligation thus laid upon them. I rejoice to know that, while there is room and a welcome in your house of worship for those thus brought into the fold, there are not a few of them on your roll of communicants who in their respective homes and circles will themselves be centres of intelligent Christian influence.

I am well aware, also, how perfectly organized, how efficient and how zealously and lovingly conducted are your various church-charities, and how large a part you have borne in what are often called the common burdens, — say rather privileges, — constant and occasional, for the relief of want and distress, the maintenance of beneficent institutions, and the diffusion of Christian knowledge and piety. I know, too, that you agree with me in tracing a preponderantly large proportion of this Christian work and of the blessedness which you have found in it to the unceasing energy, the fervent sympathy, and the unerring discretion of your minister, and that it is to those of you who have done the most that his part seems the largest.

But his benevolent agency has extended far beyond your immediate cognizance. He has been connected with a large number and variety of charitable associations, and in them he has, in almost every instance, filled a foremost place in the appropriation, distribution, and management of funds. The Apostles said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables," — that is, tables for the distribution of alms. The modern Church has thought differently, and in the many services of this kind which devolved upon your minister because of his superior fitness for them, we who have been associated with him have been greatly impressed by his skill in securing, husbanding, and apportioning the income of pecuniary trusts; and as he has per-

formed like offices for charity funds belonging to your own church, he has fulfilled in this department alone no small stewardship, and won no scanty thanks and gratitude.

Even beyond these official duties you can hardly estimate, and I am sure cannot overestimate, the heavy drafts on the time and labor of a minister of Dr. Ellis's age, standing, and reputation, in behalf of numerous interests, personal and public, which rendered his life one of exceptional toil, while the weekly rest that came to those under his charge was to him less of a Sabbath season than the other six. Your church in its earlier days had a double pastorate, and yet — I do not speak without a careful comparison of the former with the present time — with not half the labor now required of a single minister. Could you have followed your pastor from day to day, you would, I doubt not, have found him the busiest man among you. I lay stress on this, that I may speak of those essential, though so often slighted virtues, — lesser they are called, but without them it is hard to practise the greater, — order, punctuality, fidelity to engagements, wise economy of time, in which, as in the graces that make a more conspicuous show, your pastor has been your exemplar, — because "faithful in little, faithful also in much."

I have spoken of your minister's various and incessant industries. Of much greater importance is the spirit that has shaped and pervaded them. Tongue-work, hand-work, alms-doing are a multipli-

cand, — in this case, indeed, a very large one, — of which the mass of soul, the quality and quantity of character are the far greater multiplier, and thus the most significant factor in the product. All your pastor's work has had its efficacy enlarged and extended to a far greater degree than you can well know by its being done by him.

As I look back upon his life, I can think of no term that designates his character so fully as Christ-likeness. This has been his unceasing aim, and we have witnessed its ever more and more signal and manifest realization. With the modesty of one who has supreme excellence for his model, and who thus, while far beyond his brethren, must still say, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," he had the impregnable steadfastness of conviction, principle, and purpose that belongs to him who in matters of right and duty confers not with flesh and blood, but seeks counsel from the ever-open heaven. That this true man of God has for these many years preached the Gospel among you by incarnating it in his whole life and making it resplendent by his own beauty of holiness, is for you an enduring and immeasurable good. Such a man's works follow him, not only in heaven, but on earth in a train of living light, how long, how wide, God only knows.

Too soon for us, we feel, but for him in fitting time, he has been called home, — in early autumn, while his leaf had not begun to fade. For us who

linger on till the verge of winter, however gently a kind Providence may lead us, there must be the slow withering of the summer's green, — a conscious decrease and decline as to all that has made life bright and glad. Happy they to whom it is given to renew their youth before the frosts of age have blighted it, — who run without weariness and walk without fainting in the light of the eternal day before their steps falter on the earthly race. Nor can we fail to recognize the Divine mercy even in the appalling suddenness of his departure. We are thankful that he was spared the pain of parting from those unspeakably dear, — that the only summons of death that he heard was the voice of Jesus awakening him out of sleep.

In our firm belief we see heaven open for husband, father, brother, pastor, friend, to enter in. Be it ours to keep it open, ever open, that, following in duty, toil, and sacrifice those who have gone up on high, we may follow them through the death-shadow on the shining way, and be with them again in the home where there are no partings, and where the farewell is never uttered.

THE LAST WORDS OF DR. ELLIS TO HIS PEOPLE.

On Sunday, October 18, Professor Francis G. Peabody, of Cambridge, read to a large and sympathetic congregation the sermon which Dr. Ellis had intended to preach on the Sunday after his return. Mr. Peabody prefaced the reading as follows: —

Two weeks before your minister died he sat down in London to prepare his first sermon to you. It was to have been the natural outpouring of his heart on returning from his journey. This first sermon of the year proved to be his last message to his people, and it speaks to you now of a journey from which he is not to return. Except for a few letters of private interest, these are the last words he had to say to the world. They have seemed to his friends too beautiful and precious a message for you to lose; and I have been given the great privilege of reading them to you to-day. Even apart from their circumstances I find in them the rarest beauty and impressiveness. They breathe in every line the happiness with which we are thankful to know that his last days were full, and they are all aglow with the problems of the immediate future and with the sympathies of a great heart. Let us listen to them as they speak to us out of that other world which is yet so near. He being dead yet speaketh. Blessed are the dead who die thus in the Lord; for they rest from their labors and their works do follow them.

FOR the thirty-third autumn, I am here to meet the congregation as it slowly comes together from the long summer dispersion. It is not easy to choose and speak the first words. There is much which one would wish to say, if only they to whom it might be interesting were here, and it is but natural to wait a little for the larger company. And yet when the minister has, for long weeks, put the ocean between himself and his parishioners, and comes back to home and church, as I am coming now for the fourth time from strange and far-off lands, it is impossible to take up the parable as if one had only gone to the next city or State; and the preacher cannot bring, as his first message, some well-worn and altogether familiar word. And, indeed, my summer has been no common one. Besides much else which has been very pleasant and very helpful, the emphasis of the past weeks has fallen and rested upon one word beyond all others. It has been largely one long day of *light*, and, as you know, our Holy Scriptures, old and new, have much to say from first to last of Light. It is almost the first word in Genesis, as it is almost the last word in Revelation. In the beginning God said, Let there be light! and there was light. Light is the pivot upon which life turns. Light and darkness are set over each against the other, as evil and good. We wait for the light; we prophesy and promise the light; we say there is light farther on, higher

up; the night is far spent, the day is at hand. No wonder that when heaven and earth met in the visions of faith, it was a sun which should no more go down and a land of unshadowed brightness; no wonder that when men of God spoke of the new creation they said, There shall be no night there! Not because he was recalling anything which he had ever seen, but because he was filled with the Life of Him to whom darkness and light are both alike, the seer had this vision to tell. And yet all the while even on this earth and in this very world, and whilst these months and years were completing their round, the prophet's dream had been a reality of mortal life, a part of human experience, an anticipation and foregleam of things which should come to pass. For indeed, this very world is as wondrous as any of them, and it needed, this summer, no very long journey to place me under another heavens and on another earth, and we who were so privileged got a new and grateful sense of the glory and mystery of our dwelling-place. It comes first to my lips as I stand again in this familiar place after these long vacation weeks to say to you, I have been in a land which knew no night, where day unto day uttered speech, evening and morning standing face to face and passing on the parable. It is, as you know, a very familiar saying that one part of the world does not know how the other part lives; and it was passing strange to know at length that for so many men, women, and children there had always

been a Midnight Sun, to light up hill, and valley, and ocean, and great inland seas, and human faces. I trust that it may be your privilege some time to pass through the gates into that golden city which might well symbolize the heavenly splendors. Day by day you come steadily into the light, as you move along the iron road or over the deep blue waters reaching far up into the land. Somehow the night retreats farther and farther, and the hours of light will not come to an end, and the sky is long ablaze even after the sun has at last gone down. You pass a farmhouse, and the children are at play upon the green in the rich twilight, or your ship crosses the track of a fisher casting his net in a sea upon which the full moon pours its lost brightness. As you keep your northward way the snow-capped mountains, and the streams pouring down their sides, and the multitude of the islands, come forth beautiful and wonderful in a light not dimmed but only softened and as it were etherealized and idealized, until at last the twilight of the first day blends with the twilight of the second in an exceeding glory, and the sun no more goes down. If happily you are where I was, on the ocean, with no mountain peak to hide the sun from your wondering eyes, the evening and the morning are one and the same day, and there is not even the semblance of night there. It is a translation and transfiguration. Of course we all knew that there was such a world, but before that night it had been

to us no glad and solemn reality of man's life, no fresh experience of the possibilities of earth, no call to testify, as one alone can do whose own eyes have seen the sight, unto the glory of the Lord, who dwelleth in the Light and with whom is no darkness at all. And so, as I say, outwardly at least, my way over sea and land has been a way of light. It was an experience with which one was not ready to part.

And yet in this, as in so much else, what we most need and what is best for us in the end, certainly for earth and time, is not the unending day with its never-setting sun, but the blessed succession of light and darkness, the time of labor and the time of rest. We must go away from that sky whilst it was still all on fire; for the time it was a loss; but surely it was better to go than to linger on until the shadows of the long winter's night had gathered. If we can scarcely conceive of anything more delicious than an arctic summer, so, on the other hand, an arctic winter must be dreary and depressing beyond expression, however relieved by auroral lights. How one would long for a single sunlit day though it were the shortest! Even through those shortening days and gathering shadows we were moving away from threatening night, and our wintry months should not lack hours of that light which is so pleasant to the eyes as it is poured down from unclouded skies upon our own snow-fields. So out of an inexhaustible abundance the Divine Work-

master makes all things beautiful in their time, and for the larger part of mankind blends the darkness and the light in ever-varying measures, and gives us, in unnumbered days, unnumbered miracles of power and love. If only we bring eyes to see withal, these days whose suns still rise and set shall come to us with all that we need of life and beauty, — days in which it shall be a luxury to draw the breath of life, days too which are cloudy and dark only that their clouds may be as pillars of brightness in the evening sky. The middle way is still the best, — not all light, not all darkness, a winter which invites and nerves us to vigorous effort and yet refreshes us with many a day of almost summer warmth and brightness. Are not these the outward conditions of the happiest activity of body, mind, and spirit?

However we may answer the question in our moods of hope or of discouragement, they are our conditions. I cannot doubt that as in so many years and generations faithful men and women will turn them to good account, and not least in these cities which the Divine Providence gives to us to rouse our moral energies and to try our moral and religious faith. It is too soon, as I have said, to make up the record of these vacation weeks. We know not what a day may bring forth; and the days of the summer which is ended have yielded not a little of public and private interest, which will be sure to engage and occupy us later on. For myself, I have been far more than ever before removed from my

own proper world, and can scarcely measure or tell what has befallen it. I am confident, however, in the hope that it is a brightening world, and that we are to have a partial relief from some of our anxieties. If we feel, as we well may, that the nation has lost, in the death of its great captain, one of its noblest servants and benefactors, we must count it all joy that days of such suffering have come to an end, and may well be profoundly grateful that reconciliations and reunions, to which the leader of our armies so heartily contributed, remove far into the unseen future any vision of such fearful strife amongst brethren. Had we needed him, he would not have failed us; but, thank God! there will be no such need; no, not in the days of the youngest of you! What element of strife can there be like that question of man's ownership in man, which is forever settled? North and South and East and West, England and America, the mother country and the child, have come together at the grave of our President and the General of our armies, and they say with him, "Let us have peace." Do not all the people say "Amen"? Yes, peace on earth, good will amongst men! for surely this is the message of the Lord Jesus, and the purpose of God concerning His children!

Mr. Peabody then concluded as follows: —

Here, abruptly, with this last strain of joy and hope, the sermon stops. These are the last words which can reach

you from your minister. He has passed out of the mingled sunshine and shadows of this world into the light of which his last sermon speaks. How strange and beautiful it is that, as he thought thus tenderly, not of himself but of his first message to you, he should be writing of that translation of life from darkness to light which he was the first to experience! It seems as if this journey of his, which made his last days in our world so full of happiness, was but the prefiguring of his departure from among us into the region of eternal day! I do not think this sermon would have seemed to him a finished sermon. It was, no doubt, but a fragment of the message which he meant to bring. It is easy to see how he would have gone on to strengthen this contrast of the days and nights of our world and the midnight sunshine of the North. It would have been the contrast between that at which we might wonder and that wherein we might best work and rest. He would have summoned us away from this longing for visions of strange things to the opportunities of the place and life where we are set. It was the problems of this city and of this winter which were evidently beginning to be the burden of his mind and heart; and it was to the light which is to be found, not far away, but here, in all this varied world of your duties and opportunities, that he would have finally led your thoughts.

And yet I cannot call this message which now speaks to us out of the heavens a fragment. It is rather the one complete message which such a man and such a life can leave among his people, — the message of *light*. I remember that when a great man in England, — a man whose nature was much akin to this preacher of to-day, — when Frederick Denison Maurice died, the little knot of his dearest friends stood about his grave in a sorrow that seemed inconsolable. It seemed as if a great light had

gone out and could no more be seen. And yet a deeper note of feeling was touched when one of these disciples said to the rest who stood there: "What life there is here!" Yes, life in what seemed to be death, and light in what seemed to be darkness, because the work done and the words spoken in ways like this cannot go out or die. So it is to-day. We meet as mourners to hear the last words of him who seems dead, and behold! it is a message, not of death, but of life; not of darkness, but of light. What life there is here! What permanence in this kind of spiritual force! And what a happy entrance must it have been for this soul, with this message of light upon his lips, to pass into the light forever! He had his hours of darkness; he has known arctic winters of the soul; but in him was fulfilled that saying of the prophet which pictures the course of the good life as like a day of mingled light and shadow, yet growing brighter as the sunset comes. "And it shall be a day known unto the Lord, not day nor night, but it shall come to pass that at the evening time there shall be light!"

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

[At a meeting of the Standing Committee, Messrs. George O. Shattuck, D. Waldo Salisbury, and James C. White were appointed to prepare Resolutions upon the death of Dr. Ellis.]

Whereas, in the course of Divine Providence, our beloved minister, the Reverend Rufus Ellis, has suddenly and peacefully passed from this life, the Standing Committee of the First Church, desiring to record for those who may come after them some tribute to his great worth, and some expression of the affectionate and grateful remembrance in which they hold his long, faithful, and loving service for the First Church, do hereby

Resolve, That during his ministry of thirty-two years he strove by earnest efforts in the pulpit, by taking the lead in every good work, by exemplifying a pure, gentle, and loving spirit, to build up a church of Christ, and to this purpose he freely consecrated his great gifts as a scholar, his sound practical wisdom, his broad sympathies, and his capacity for untiring labor.

Resolved, That while he found delight in good learning, in nature, in art, and in the company of friends, he felt that his field was the world, and he embraced with his sympathies and sought to bring alike within the sphere of his Christian influence and within the fold of his church the young and old, the rich and poor, and the learned and ignorant.

Resolved, That while thus devoted to his church, he neglected no duty of a good citizen, but was foremost in every movement for the promotion of education and the social welfare of the community.

Resolved, That these Resolutions be placed on the records of the First Church, and that a copy be transmitted to the family of the deceased, with the assurance of their most affectionate sympathy in this great bereavement.